

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 939

Introduced by Assembly Member Yee

February 20, 2003

An act to add Sections 5781 and 14132.74 to the Welfare and Institutions Code, relating to Medi-Cal.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 939, as introduced, Yee. Telemedicine: psychiatric inpatient hospital services: reimbursement.

Existing law provides for the Medi-Cal program, administered by the State Department of Health Services, under which qualified low-income persons are provided with health care services.

Existing law requires the State Department of Mental Health to implement managed mental health care for Medi-Cal beneficiaries through fee-for-service or capitated rate contracts with mental health plans, including individual counties, counties acting jointly, any qualified individual or organization, or a nongovernmental entity. Existing law authorizes counties to contract with mental health providers to provide mental health services to Medi-Cal beneficiaries.

Under existing law, the State Department of Health Services is required to allow psychiatrists to receive fee-for-service Medi-Cal reimbursement for services provided through telemedicine until June 30, 2004, or until the State Department of Mental Health and mental health plans, in collaboration with stakeholders, develop a method for reimbursing psychiatric services provided through telemedicine that is administratively feasible for the mental health plans, primary care providers, and psychiatrists providing the services, whichever occurs later.

Existing regulations establish reimbursement procedures for the reimbursement of acute psychiatric inpatient hospital services for each fee-for-service Medi-Cal hospital with a contract with a mental health provider, and for the reimbursement of those services for each such hospital without such a contract.

This bill would provide that mental health providers that provide services to Medi-Cal beneficiaries under a contract with a provider of psychiatric inpatient hospital services, and mental health providers that provide mental health services to Medi-Cal beneficiaries through telemedicine, shall be reimbursed in the same manner as providers of acute psychiatric inpatient hospital services.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes. State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

- 1 SECTION 1. Section 5781 is added to the Welfare and
- 2 Institutions Code, to read:
- 3 5781. Mental health providers that provide services to
- 4 Medi-Cal beneficiaries under a contract with a provider of
- 5 psychiatric inpatient hospital services shall be reimbursed in the
- 6 same manner as providers of acute psychiatric inpatient hospital
- 7 services in accordance with Article 1 (commencing with Section
- 8 1820.100) of Subchapter 2 of Chapter 11 of Title 9 of the
- 9 California Code of Regulations.
- 10 SEC. 2. Section 14132.74 is added to the Welfare and
- 11 Institutions Code, to read:
- 12 14132.74. Mental health providers that provide services to
- 13 Medi-Cal beneficiaries through telemedicine shall be reimbursed
- 14 in the same manner as providers of acute psychiatric inpatient
- 15 hospital services in accordance with Article 1 (commencing with
- 16 Section 1820.100) of Subchapter 2 of Chapter 11 of Title 9 of the
- 17 California Code of Regulations.

